


# BlueDevil II

88th Regional Readiness Command

Winter/Spring 2004 Vol. VIII, No. 2



**An Army at War  
supporting a Nation at War**

## **Moving Out**

The 855th Quartermaster Company  
from South Bend, Indiana,  
convoys to mobilization site.

[www.usarc.army.mil/88thrrsc/](http://www.usarc.army.mil/88thrrsc/)

# From the CG's Foxhole

By Brig. Gen. Michael W. Beasley

## The War Marches On

Blue Devil Soldiers continue to work around the globe in performing our nation's business and securing America's liberties.

As we bring home this winter and spring some 5,500 Soldiers from Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo and Cuba, we are mobilizing and deploying about 4,200 more Soldiers to those far away lands. Our Combat Support Hospital elements are returning from heroic work in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo as we say farewell to the single largest Reserve military unit now deploying to Afghanistan, our 367th Engineer Battalion from Minnesota.

More military police units and Soldiers are heading to Guantanamo and we continue to support missions in Korea, Central and South America. Blue Devils are even in Alaska performing road building training and missions. Truly, our missions and our impacts are worldwide.

While we share and applaud the success of our Soldiers, however, we must share the occasional grief and tragedies of war.

Eight Blue Devil Soldiers have been killed in action in Iraq, the first eight Soldiers to die in combat while wearing the Cloverleaf shoulder patch since World War II. Four of those Soldiers, including three noncommissioned officers, were members of the 652nd Engineer Company, with its headquarters in Ellsworth, Wis.

Unit members of the 652nd also have received some 25 awards of the Purple Heart, another testimony to un-

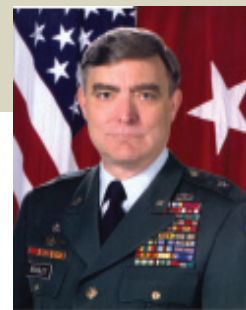
precedented bravery and sacrifice. We were truly delighted in joining with their families to celebrate their return home from the war in late March.

By the time you read this column, we will be in the midst of celebrating the 60th anniversary of the 88th Infantry Division's liberation of Rome, Italy, which occurred on June 4, 1944. Those original Blue Devil Soldiers lost over 15,000 Soldiers from their ranks in a series of extraordinarily difficult combat operations, while moving northward from Naples, to Rome, to Florence and a final peace-keeping mission in the Trieste Region.

Along the way, the 88th Division earned the recognition of having the best and most effective wartime record of any American fighting division in World War II. It is the Blue Devil heritage that reminds us that then, as now, freedom is never "free," and never without tremendous costs and sacrifice.

I am as proud of our Soldiers today as any of the former commanders of the 88th Division, the 88th Army Reserve Command, and the 88th Regional Support Command. Those of you who have deployed, those who have returned and those whose training and preparations are for the days ahead share in the pride and glory of being Blue Devils. It is a proud and robust organization; but it is you, the Soldiers and families, who are our heroes.

Fight on!



## BlueDevil II

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### **ON THE COVER**

Photo by Maj. Willie Harris, 88th Regional Readiness Command Public Affairs Staff Officer.

### **ON THE BACK COVER**

US Army Photo.

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# From the Top

By Command Sgt. Maj. John Werner

A thought that I feel we as Blue Devil Soldiers have to keep in the forefronts of our military minds is that "every Soldier is a combat Soldier."

Combat Soldier first, your military occupational skill comes second.

This is going to be a long and an ongoing war. The Active Component is stretched thin, and the Reserve Components are equal partners in this nation's war on terrorism. It's not a question of 'if' you're going, but more of a question of 'when' you are going.

Keep in mind the focus of the new Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Peter Schoomaker, on the importance of the Warrior Ethos. The mindset should be that of a warrior that is technically proficient, and above all else, can operate and survive on today's battlefield.

Each one of us must refocus our thought process and understand that as Soldiers we must be a complete Soldier. Technically competent, yes, combat ready, always!

The Soldier's Creed says it far better than I. Read it, know it, and understand it.

Remember individual combat skills we learned a long time ago in basic? Dust them off, retrain and reengage.

As I go around to the mobilization sites and watch our fellow Blue Devils go through the train-up for deployments, I see the interest, the desire to train and perform the tasks the right way. The intensity in their faces show me that they understand where they are going and what they are being called on to do. I ask, why must we as individuals wait until that moment to be effective, interested, and focused on training? This kind of training must be the norm.

My recent visits to 88th Soldiers deployed in the theater showed me the great importance of emphasizing the Warrior Ethos. I saw 88th Soldiers performing more than

just their technical skills. I saw Soldiers in engineer, transportation, quartermaster and personnel units doing their MOS duties and when they weren't working in their MOS, they were performing and executing village sweeps, running roadside check points, patrolling and standing guard on buildings and on the wire of their defensive perimeter.

We need to not only sharpen our warrior fighting skills, but also make sure our families are taken care of before a deployment hits us full force in the face. Do not forget to communicate with them and write as often as you can when you get to your mobilization and duty station. Tell them the truth. Tell them what you are doing, and how life is. Prevent your families from 'living' off of every Television or newspaper story involving your deployment because the reality is sometimes perceived differently when viewing it through the media. I will say it again, communicate with them and do not make your situation out to be more or less than what it actually is.

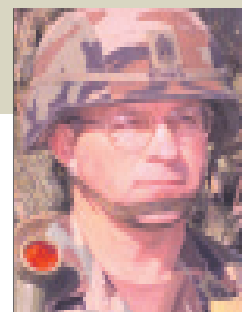
Do not let a mobilization sneak up on you. Make sure all your important records are up to date, and orient your loved ones to all the important tasks that need to be completed in your absence. Also, do not forget to give your employers the notification they need.

Finally, remember to keep Operational Security in mind.

It's like what you hear preached on the qualification range if you have rounds, you have time. If you haven't been alerted or are presently in a Troop Program Unit status, then Soldiers -- you have the rounds, and you have the time.

**NOW IS THE TIME TO PREPARE!**

**-Take The Point!**



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# Equal Opportunity

## DIVERSITY IN THE 88<sup>th</sup>

By Richard Cox  
88th RRC Equal Opportunity

What is this thing called diversity? Is it a new buzzword? Yet another attempt at seeking the so-called politically correct direction or is it finally a way for all members of an organization to feel they contribute to productivity? Whatever you think of diversity, there is no mistake it works and adds to the accomplishments of all organizations.

Several decades ago, the Army adopted the systems of Organizational Effectiveness. Then we went on to Total Quality Management and Total Quality Leadership. All of these programs were an attempt at involving members of an organization in the decision making process. Needless to say, most of the above are no longer practiced, or are they?

Diversity or Valuing Diversity is a simple plan. Senior Department of Defense leaders came to the conclusion that our military was growing; growing not in real size but in experience and education levels. The growth in technical applications, equipment, and communications required military members to think and react much more to changing environments than ever before.

If you look around our command and especially in the Reserve Component in general, you will find much more diversity than Active Components. Army Reserve Sol-

diers bring to the table all the diversity required to ensure a smooth operation. Think for a moment the race, gender, education and varied levels of work experience within the Reserve. Maximizing diversity allows all leaders to get several different perspectives. You may have a young sergeant with a master's degree in business and maintains his or her own business, teachers in every discipline you can imagine. Doctors, lawyers, engineers.

Diversity in every race, color, gender, religion, education and experience. Leaders remain responsible for the decision making process and the outcomes brought on by their decisions. As your Equal Opportunity Specialist, I advise you to look a bit closer at the diverse pool of Soldiers and civilians that surround you. As the old saying goes, 'Two heads are better than one.' When time and security permit, and it normally does, seek several points of view and you might just see the total impact of your decisions. Utilizing the diversity within your organization builds cohesion and breaks down the perceived barriers brought on by one-sided decision-making.

Having served for 24 years in the Active Component and now serving as a civilian with the Reserve, it has been my experience that the diversity within the Reserve wins hands down. I wish I had then the amount of diversity and experience at my disposal as leaders do today. The 88th is an outstanding organization. However, every organization has room for improvement.

## Letters

### From the editor

The Blue Devil II is for Soldiers, DA civilians and family members. We invite readers' views. Articles must be less than 150 words and include name, rank and address. Anonymous letters will generally not be used. We may condense your views because of space. The staff can not publish or answer everyone, but it will use representative views. Write to: Letters, Blue Devil II, 506 Roeder Circle, Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4009, or e-mail: 88PAO@usarc-emh2.army.mil.

I am writing to provide a little additional information about a story published in the spring/summer 2003 edition of Blue Devil II. There was an article about the 909th Forward Surgical Team entitled Semper Gumby, which the unit claims as its motto. While it may claim that as its slogan, the unit 'borrowed' it from my unit, the 801st Combat Support Hospital.

The expression, which translates loosely to 'always flexible,' was coined by (now) Lt. Col. Kathryn Scherck, who was serving as a nurse with the 900th MASH in the early '90s. After the 900th was deactivated in September 1994, it was reconstituted as Detachment 1, 801st CSH. The motto stayed with us. The following year (I believe it was), we attended annual train-

ing at Fort McCoy, Wis., with the 909th FST, which was activated recently. It was from there, or perhaps from one of the 900th MASH alumni who went to the 909th, that Semper Gumby became 'their motto.'

I certainly do not want to detract from the outstanding article on a very fine unit, nor do I wish to suggest that they stole the motto from us. I do, however, wish to set the record straight on the origin of Semper Gumby, and point out that it is still used by the 801st CSH, which is currently deployed in Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sincerely,  
SFC Clark F. Anderson  
801st CSH (FWD)

# Blue Devil Soldiers Pitch For The Twins Again

By Sgt. Tony M. Lindback  
88<sup>TH</sup> RRC, Det. 1, Public Affairs Office

As the end of the regular season neared, the Minnesota Twins are ranked number one. After all of the memorable moments from this season, the Twins took a moment before the game on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> to reflect on the team's home opener.

At the season's opener the Twins did something a little different than the traditional opening pitch from the mound to home plate. Showing the team's appreciation to the men and women of the United States military, the Twins decided to pass on the honor of throwing the first pitch to some Soldiers who were serving in Kuwait. With the help of modern technology, the Soldiers were able to throw that first pitch from Kuwait to the Metrodome in Minneapolis. With the rotations of personnel that are currently going on overseas, the Soldiers that were on the large screen for the opener, could then appear in person.

The Twins faced off against the Detroit Tigers Sept. 20. After being introduced to the crowd in the dome, and getting a very warm welcome, Sgt. Maj. Betsey DePoint, Sgt. Kirby Oaks, Sgt. Josh Tverberg, and Sgt. Greta Lind simultaneously threw out the first pitch. Each person threw to a different Twins player, a little different than the pitch from Tverberg to Lind in Kuwait.

When asked about the differences between being in Kuwait for the first pitch and being in the dome this time Lind said, "It was awkward when we were in Kuwait to

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**"I'm a little nervous, but confident. The one we threw from Kuwait wasn't very far so we'll see what happens today."**

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throw out the first pitch. We had no clue what was going on. We had a guy standing in front of us with a camera and we were getting ques, but we couldn't tell what was happening in the dome. This time was a lot better. We could feel how much the crowd was into it. It really helped

take the nervousness out of it."

Having some friends and family at the game can be an added boost to an event such as this. In the stands for Lind was her father, Dean Lind. He said, "I didn't get to go to the game earlier in the season, I had a conference to go to. I did catch it on television. There were a few tears. They were happy tears, we were glad to see her and that she was doing well. There were tears when she was on the field today too. They were happier tears. We're just so glad she's home."

Sgt. Josh Tverberg had a few comments about the pitch itself. "I'm a little nervous, but confident. The one we threw from Kuwait wasn't very far so we'll see what happens today. Hopefully we can get it across the plate," he said.

After a comment about the pitch in Kuwait, Tverberg got a little on the defensive side and said, "Yeah, It was a little weak. I think that's Greta's fault. She asked me not to throw it very hard." When he was asked about how his pitch was going to look for the Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> game he said, "I was practicing with my brother in the back yard. We'll see what happens."

The four Soldiers who had served in Kuwait and Baghdad under CENTCOM made their way to the field. Loud applause and cheers were welcomed and spurred on more by the Soldiers waving and greeting their audience. All at once all four baseballs were heaved through the air. The crowd was on its feet for the pitch.

The color guard that was also made up by members of the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command took to the field. Presenting the colors for the playing of the Star Spangled Banner were as follows: Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jeffrey Imhoff, noncommissioned officer in charge and national color bearer; Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Stephen Page, lead rifle; Staff Sgt. William Gunderson, Army color bearer; Staff Sgt. John Itzin, 88th color bearer; and Sgt. Daniel Thill, trail rifle.

When the national anthem was done playing and the Soldiers were off the field they expressed their feelings to a few reporters. The Soldiers involved said they were happy to be at the dome for the pitch this time around. The Soldiers seemed happiest just to be home though. Tverberg said, "Just to be home and see and spend time with my friends and family, that's all I could ask for."



# The 88th RRC's Soldier Readiness Processing – A Reality, Not a “Drill”



A group of Soldiers have their records validated.

Photo by Maj. Willie Harris, 88th RRC Public Affairs Staff Officer

By Mike Walton  
88th RRC Public Affairs Office

With the recent announcement of the next round of units slated for possible deployment to points in Southwest Asia, regional readiness commands like the 88th also readied themselves for deployment of their “SRP” – Soldier Readiness Processing. The mere speaking of the acronym gives cause for concern among those at the headquarters level.

SRP determines individual and unit deployability. During this admittedly time-consuming process, a unit finds out quickly whether all of its members meet the Army standard for moving forward toward a potential battlefield. Most importantly, it identifies shortcomings and potential problems that a Soldier or his or her unit may have “getting out the door.”

With overseas deployments approaching more than one year in length, it becomes increasingly important that commanders at all levels know the people they are sending overseas, their equipment being sent, and the status of their families being left behind while they deploy. The SRP

determines all of these valuable variables.

The SRP is conducted by each of the 10 Army Reserve Regional Readiness Commands. Each RRC has the responsibility of developing teams of personnel, logistics, family readiness, security and intelligence, unit operations, individual and unit training, legal, religious support and public affairs “experts” to work closely with deploying units. Prior to 2003, this was accomplished by teams of Soldiers going directly to the Reserve Center of the pending deploying unit, and “getting them ready to go” using a pre-developed checklist.

“The problem with the old checklists were that there was little to no coordination and we ended up doing double, sometimes triple work,” said one commander.

“I like the new approach.”

There was another problem with this method...a heavy personnel cost along with a logistical nightmare every time that a new unit is deployed. Additionally, if units are recalled to active duty (the actual term; Soldiers just call it being “activated for active duty”) on the same weekend in say, Ohio and Michigan, it requires two complete teams



**Soldiers waiting patiently.**

*Photo by Maj. Willie Harris. 88th RRC Public Affairs Staff Officer*

sent to two centers and with a logistical and information management “tail”.

This resulted in inconsistencies between the quality of the training and support rendered as everyone “looked at the clock” and tried to get everything done “by the COB” (close of business).

The “new approach” brings the entire unit directly to the 88th RRC’s headquarters at Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

**“When you raise your hand and say ‘I do’ and enter the Army, you have to realize that you can be called to war.”**

**Sgt. Maj. Michael Russell**

For four days, the unit’s records are checked, information processed, and small unit training and leadership development training are all conducted in tandem and coordinated by the subject matter experts who deal with those issues on a daily basis.

The “new approach” was tried on a small scale during January and February of 2003, with close to 1500 Soldiers from several 88th RRC units coming to Fort Snelling to receive the training and have their records and other “paper products” checked. Because many units have their equipment stored at regional storage sites like Fort McCoy, Wis., the need to send large num-

ber of teams to the Reserve Center became less of a requirement.

“Doing it here at Fort Snelling makes the process easier for both the Soldier and his or her family,” said Sgt. Maj. Michael Russell, G-1/Personnel Sergeant Major who served as one of the main coordinators of the process. “We have the SMEs (subject matter experts) right here at the flagpole and we can work through just about any issue that the Soldier or his or her family may have.”

About 60 Soldiers from the headquarters served as the core staff during the previous run last year; double that number is being utilized this time thanks to some “lessons learned” from the previous SRP run. This includes members of the 326th Personnel Replacement Battalion from Indianapolis, Indiana along with two Personnel Replacement Companies, the 282nd and the 855th.

“Our units are doing exactly what they would do in war,” said Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Joy Koester, looking around the room, “and that is to process replacement units and individuals at a military installation.” The 326th and its companies are serving in annual training mode along with many Soldiers and civilians from the 88th RRC headquarters.

The 88th RRC has conducted centralized SRPs for over 18,000 Blue Devil Soldiers.



**Sgt. Maj. Michael Russell talks to Staff Sgt. Tracey Buckner during the SRP.**

*Photo by Maj. Willie Harris. 88th RRC Public Affairs Staff Officer*

**SRP**



# One foot in front of the other...

## *The Walk of a Lifetime*

By Maj. Willie Harris  
88th RRC Public Affairs Staff Officer

The promise a brother made to his sister to walk her down the aisle on her wedding day seemed like a simple task, however that promise became secondary to his obligation as a Soldier.

Spc. Keith E. Deutsch's plans to be at his sister's wedding in their hometown of New Prague, Minn., suddenly changed when he found out he was mobilizing to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"When my father died 11 years ago, I knew I would have to have someone else walk me down the aisle at my wedding. My father was a big part of my life, but I knew that either my mother or my two brothers would be the right replacement," said Deutsch's sister, Jessica J. Frantz.

Initially, she asked her mother to walk her down the aisle, but her mother was concerned about being too emotional on the day of the wedding. She then made the decision to have both of her brothers walk her down the aisle.

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003, Deutsch went to his mailbox thinking he was going to retrieve the normal assortment of mail along with some Valentine's Day cards from his family and friends. Instead, he found a letter with a set of military orders directing him to mobilize.

Deutsch told his older sister he didn't think he would be able to walk her down the aisle because chances were he would still be in Iraq at the

time of the wedding. Frantz was scheduled to marry on October 18<sup>th</sup>, Deutsch's deployment meant their other brother, Nick, would have to walk her down the aisle by himself.

"I asked my other brother, Nick, if he would walk me down the aisle by himself because Keith was already at Fort Carson waiting to go to Iraq," said Frantz.

Deutsch was a heavy equipment operator with the 367th Engineer Battalion based in Mankato, Minn. He drove bulldozers, dump trucks and front-end loaders. When Deutsch mobilized, he was attached to the 244th Engineer Battalion, 4th Infantry Division. After spending a short time in Boulder, Colo., with the members of the 244<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Deutsch flew to Iraq with his new unit on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

Deutsch said there was high level of anxiety amongst the Soldiers while waiting in Kuwait for their equipment to arrive.

Deutsch said, "We kept ourselves busy by performing preventative maintenance on their vehicles and doing physical training."

The tall, lanky Deutsch told how everyone's temperament changed at the end of June, when the mortar

rounds began to land.

"We were in a place called Camp Normandy when I was injured. We were improving their base," said Deutsch.

On the morning of August 29<sup>th</sup>, while fueling their vehicles in preparation for a convoy, Deutsch and his fellow Soldiers came under enemy attack. The Soldiers suffered a number of serious casualties. Deutsch had his right leg amputated above the knee and received a major shrapnel wound to his stomach from the impact of the rocket propelled grenade attack near their base camp.

"We just returned fire. Usually they don't hit anything with their rocket propelled grenades, this time they got lucky," said Deutsch.

Shortly after the devastation of the



**Spc. Keith E. Deutsch (right) shares the honor of walking his sister, Jessica, to the altar with his brother Nick.**

*Photo donated by the Deutsch family.*



blast, Deutsch was evacuated to Kuwait and later transferred to Landstuhl Army Hospital in Germany.

Once his injuries were treated and stabilized, he was transferred to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. While receiving treatment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Deutsch received visits from dignitaries ranging from Bruce Willis to President George W. Bush. After spending two months in the hospital he was flown to the Twin Cities where he spent several weeks in the Minneapolis Veteran's Affairs Medical Center.

The doctors there led Deutsch through a rigorous rehabilitation program. He faced the incredible challenge of learning how to walk with a prosthetic leg due to his amputation.

The determination to make good on his promise to his sister was proven with the long hours and hard work Deutsch put in for his rehabilitation. The entire Deutsch family was hard at work preparing for the wedding while the bride-to-be was wondering what her wedding day was going to be like.

When Frantz got to Minnesota, Keith was still at the Minneapolis Veteran's Affairs Medical Center. He seemed to be doing well, but was still having complications with the shrapnel wounds to his stomach.

"Things were looking up and we thought he'd be back in New Prague for the weekend of the wedding," said Frantz. However, on Thursday night her mother called and said that Keith had developed an extremely high fever and that she would be staying at the hospital until the doctors figured out what was wrong, she explained.

On Friday, Frantz was finishing some last minute wedding details while waiting to hear how Keith was doing. She began to wonder if he would be able to leave the hospital.

Frantz said, "When I arrived home to get ready for the rehearsal dinner my mom was there and told me that I should go down to the basement - there was a surprise for me. Thinking that someone had dropped off a wedding gift I went downstairs. As I reached the bottom of

the stairs, there was Keith!"

It was the best wedding gift ever said Frantz. After a few hugs Keith urged his sister back upstairs to get ready for the rehearsal and rehearsal dinner. Keith participated in the rehearsal - not even using his crutches for one of the run-throughs. After the rehearsal dinner he was pretty exhausted so he went home for an early night.

The next day he went with all the other groomsmen to get ready at the local hotel. He was there for all the pictures, but more importantly he was there with Nick and his sister on her wedding day, October 18, 2003.

Frantz said when the back doors to the church opened, the three of them walked in together. Everyone could feel the emotion in the air. It could be seen through the proud smiles and teary eyes watching as the three made their way to the front of the church. "I can't think of any other time in my life where I felt more elated and proud," said Frantz.

"I think your wedding day goes by faster than any other

day in your life and all I know is that it was perfect! Not only because I was getting married, but because Keith, along with the rest of my family was able to be there. The day was just as I'd been imagining it for years. The typical New Prague wedding I had always dreamed of," said Frantz.

Frantz's dream became a reality. Not due to chance, nor to good fortune did Deutsch walk his sister down the aisle. It

was due to what he was made of. Something in him would not be defeated. He would not be forced to break his promise.

"There are too many people praying for the mountains of difficulty to be removed, when what they really need is courage to climb them." – Raili A Jeffery.

Deutsch showed that he had the personal courage, the last of the seven Army values, to face the adversity laid before him. He proved his courage to himself with every 'step' of his rehabilitation. He proved his courage to the world with every step he took down the aisle.

"The greatest achievement is not in never falling, but in rising again after you fall." – Vince Lombardi.



**Actor Gary Sinise was one of the famous actors who spent time with Deutsch. Sinise actually visited with Deutsch twice.**

*Photo donated by the Deutsch family.*



# THERE'S NO GIVING THIS MP THE OLD SONG AND DANCE..

Story and photos by Sgt. Tony M. Lindback  
88th RRC, Det. 1, Public Affairs Office

## SHE GIVES IT TO YOU

Dreams of being a movie star or a singer flow like water through the minds of many people. Not everyone gets the break that could put them on the path to a life of fame and fantasy. Without that magical chance for the limelight most people follow other paths in life. Paths that offer training, education, money for schooling, a career – all the things that are incentives to join the Army. What if the Army could give that opportunity to be a star as well?

Being in the Army Reserve has given the chance at stardom to Sgt. Joanne Brown. Born a triplet in a small town that hadn't had triplets in more than 20 years, she is used to having the spotlight on her since birth. But – in the 428<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company out of South Bend, Indiana, Brown was just another Soldier – just another MP.

After being mobilized to Fort Hood, Texas, Brown heard about the Army Soldier Show accepting Army Reserve and Army National Guard Soldiers, where it had only accepted Soldiers from the active component in the past. Brown found out about the Army Soldier Show while she was at basic training and always wanted to be a part of it. Her mobilization gave her that chance.

A chance at the limelight did not come easily, however. There is a staircase of steps that have to be climbed to be accepted for the show. Some of the steps to the stage included Brown filling out many applications, submitting a video of her talent to a selection board, sending in a records brief, a commander's letter of release, an entertainment resume, a full length DA photo, her last non-commissioned officer evaluation report and a copy of her latest PT test.

After all of that cleared, Brown was screened by a board that chose Soldiers based on musical talent, ability to represent the Army with appearance, level of physical fitness and military bearing. After the screening board selected the Soldiers that were deemed qualified for the



Sgt. Joanne Brown gives the audience in Fort Drum, New York, a flash back to the 1940s with her nostalgic uniform while performing the choreography and singing in the 90 minute Army Soldier Show.







show, those Soldiers were sent to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, for a 14-day live audition -- the final deciding factor in who would make the cut. In those 14 days, live singing performances and dance routines were the obstacles that would weed out the people who would be going on to be in the show and those who would not.

Brown was the only Army Reserve Soldier to make the cut. This MP represented the Reserve while touring to 57 locations in 21 states, the District of Columbia, Korea and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, performing 103 shows. The rest of the cast and crew include active duty, and National Guard Soldiers from 10 other states, Japan, Korea and Germany.

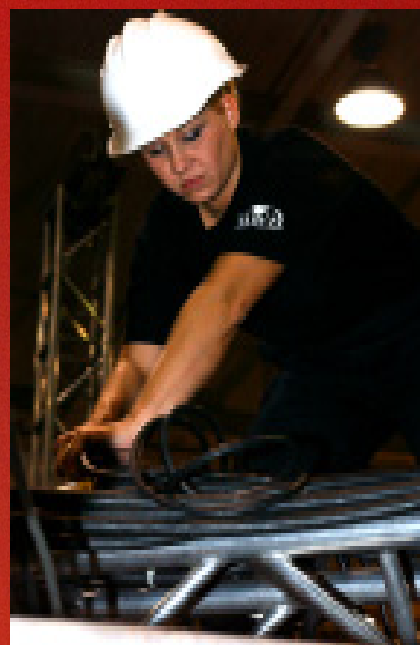
Brown said, "Bringing Soldiers from all components from so many different places together for the show is a true representation of the 'Army of One' concept. Here, there is no difference in the active component, National Guard or Reserve. No one is treated differently, unlike what some reservists have said can be felt from the active component while mobilized and working with active duty Soldiers.

"I'm very proud of being the only one in the show that is a reservist. It can be a little overwhelming to think that I'm not just representing myself, my unit and the 88<sup>th</sup>, but I'm representing the entire Army Reserve. You have no idea how much pride I take in that."

Life on the road was a little rough for Brown. Traveling all over the continental United States in a coach bus proved to be a little unsettling for the MP who gets car sick easily.

"I usually try to pass the miles and the time by sleeping," she said. "Besides, whenever we do a show we put in 16 hour days. So, it's nice to have a chance to get some rest and feel refreshed for the next show."

Brown's performances in the show



**Above: The Soldiers in the show aren't merely performers, they also do the entire setup and tear down of the stage, lighting and sound equipment. On a typical two-performance day the cast and crew are working for 16 hours.**

**Below: The cast isn't afraid to show the audience how things get shaking as Brown, with the help from backup singers, performs the Motown hit 'Heatwave.'**





gives her the opportunity to show off her voice in her favorite types of music – Country and Motown. In her Country solo she sings Lee Ann Womack’s ‘Something Worth Leaving Behind’. She also has a solo Motown piece. Standing in the spotlight she sings ‘Heatwave,’ the version Martha Reeves and the Vandellas sang.

Not always does she have the privilege of being the star on stage. She shares the spotlight in a couple 1940’s numbers called ‘Oh I hate to get up in the morning’ and ‘This is the Army’ which is a tribute to Irving Berlin, a pioneer in Army Entertainment. She also fills the role of a backup singer for a few of the other Motown songs. Brown is a dancer in many of the numbers throughout the show. With her performances and work for the stage performance, that is only 90 minutes of the day.

The 16 hour days that Brown was referring to

come from the time it takes to do the set up, the show and the tear down. Yes, the cast is as much involved behind the scenes and with loading as it is with the performance.

In a typical day the cast has two shows. The Soldiers have to do the set up, perform both shows with the last show starting at 7 p.m., do the tear down and load the truck. The tired Soldiers in the cast and crew of the Army Soldier Show are not done until a little after midnight. Illness plagued some of the cast and crew and left them unable to participate in any facet of the operation forcing the others to pick up the slack. Getting

done quickly was a delightful surprise to the pillow seeking personnel.

With the tour grinding to a halt, Brown and the rest of the cast express the bonds they have made throughout the past seven months.

“The show coming to an end is kind of bittersweet,” said Brown. “I’m happy to go home, but I’m going to miss the show. I’ve made some good friends, had a lot

home.

“I’ve been expecting to get mobilized again not too long after I get home. That’s okay. I love the military and like doing what I do. If I don’t get mobilized, that’s fine too. I’m hoping that I can get on next year’s tour for the show. I don’t know if I want to pursue a career in entertainment or law enforcement. Right now I’m getting to do both.”

Keeping the tradition of ‘entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier’ alive, and being part of a cast and crew that gives a true depiction of what the ‘Army of One’ is meant to be, the blue-eyed MP that grew up in Cassopolis, Mich., has learned more from her career in the Army Reserve than to do a simple single person arrest... She’s learned how to hold an entire audience captive.

*More information on the Army Soldier Show can be found at...<http://www.armymwr.com/portal/recreation/entertainment/history.asp>.*



**The cast must meet the audience in dress blues.**



**Cast and crew work together to get the set taken down. The entire tear down can take from three to four hours.**

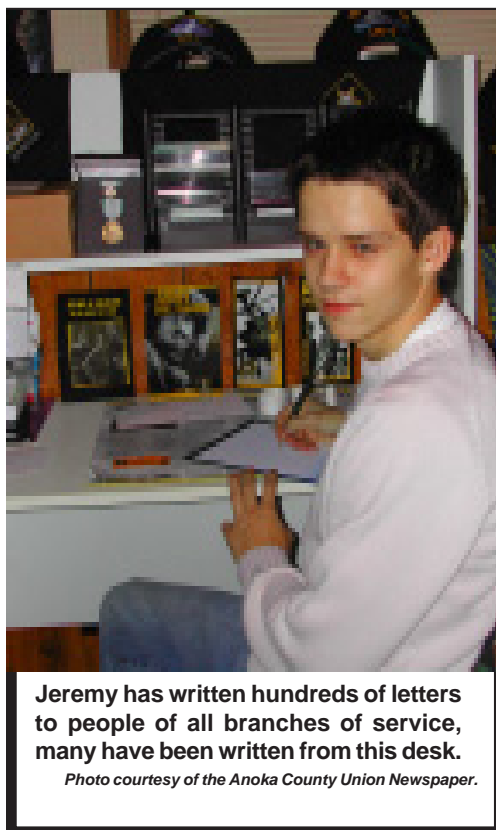
# Hometown Hero

A teenaged Minnesota student has made the cost of 37-cent stamps placed on letters to deployed service members worth a million dollars of smiles.

Jeremy M. Jenson, an Oak Grove native, gained an enormous amount of praise from leaders of the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command for his kindness and generosity toward Soldiers, Sailors, Airman and Marines stationed all over the globe.

Jenson, a high school sophomore, started sending requests to military web sites looking for addresses of military personnel so that he could write to and just say “thanks for serving”. The project started out small, a few names here and there, and now has blossomed into an all out effort with his friends, school teachers, church group members and just average citizens writing letters.

Jenson has become the focal point for many average people to take the time to send letters to Soldiers. He has made a web site where he keeps people informed of



**Jeremy has written hundreds of letters to people of all branches of service, many have been written from this desk.**

*Photo courtesy of the Anoka County Union Newspaper.*

what’s happening with his letter writing efforts with his youth church group and people who just want to help him in his efforts. To date Jeremy’s efforts have resulted in sending over 850 letters, care packages, flags and pictures to military personnel around the globe.

During this past holiday season his church sponsored a “card sending” party and he had people come over 50 miles to participate. People he never met before; but who needed little convincing to participate for such a worthwhile project.

Most 15 year-olds make up a “wish list” of Christmas presents like CD players, CD’s, computers, DVD players and the like. Near the top of Jenson’s wish list were stamps, envelopes and paper. His grandparents, friends and other

family members filled his holiday wish list.

On Veterans Day 2003 Jeremy was interviewed on his efforts for one of the television stations in Minneapolis. The station felt it was a fitting tribute to have his efforts recognized on such a special day. In addition to being shown on TV, Jeremy also received a US Army Commander’s Award for Public Service medal from the Commanding General at the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command and has been featured in several other newspaper articles in the Minneapolis area.

Jeremy was recently asked what would be the best thing that could result from the letter writing efforts. He responded with two answers.

“I want to meet the people from the 88<sup>th</sup> RRC units that I have been writing to when they get back home to Minnesota and visit Fort Bragg. I get a lot of mail from people stationed at Fort Bragg who are now overseas.”

As Americans spent time recognizing past service of Soldiers, Jeremy spent the days adding a little touch of friendship to those currently serving.

Jeremy’s website can be accessed at [www.supportusamilitary.org](http://www.supportusamilitary.org).



**Jeremy proudly displays some of the many things he’s received from his many pen pals. The collection has grown from thankful service members.**

*Photo courtesy of the Anoka County Union Newspaper.*

# The Land Warrior, A Look Into The Future



**Staff Sgt. Andrew D. Davis, 11th Infantry Regiment based at Fort Benning, Ga., poses for a photo at the 88th Regional Readiness Command's October Commander's Conference.**

**Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Chris Farley  
88th RRC, Det. 1, Public Affairs Office**

In Batman's crusade on crime in his self-titled DC comic book, the Dark Knight of Gotham City employs the use of high-tech gadgets to give him the triumphant edge on the corrupt underworld in the city he has sworn to protect. Keeping to the same principles that Batman uses to fight crime, the U.S. Army has adopted the philosophy to equip Soldiers with high-tech gadgets that gives them that needed edge to be triumphant on fighting the war on terrorism.

The up close look and demonstration of the Soldier of the future, the Land Warrior (LW), was exhibited at the 88th Regional Readiness Command's October, 2003, Commander's Conference. This demo was cosponsored

by the General John W. Vessey JR. Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) and 88th RRC.

"This is the future. This is what the kids that are coming in today, into the Army, are going to be wearing in the not so distant future," said Sgt. Maj. Robert E. Hejkal, president of the General Vessey chapter of AUSA.

According to Hejkal, the AUSA and the 88th RRC put forward an offer made by Minnesota Wire and Cable Co., one of the developers of the LW, to have a LW presentation at the Commander's Conference.

On cue, Staff Sgt. Andrew D. Davis, an active Army Soldier with the 11th Infantry Regiment from Fort Benning, Ga., made his entrance onto the stage at the Radisson South hotel in Bloomington, Minn., during the first night of the commander's conference. The onlookers sat captivated as Davis began to showcase his look and ultra modern arsenal of tools that belonged to the LW.

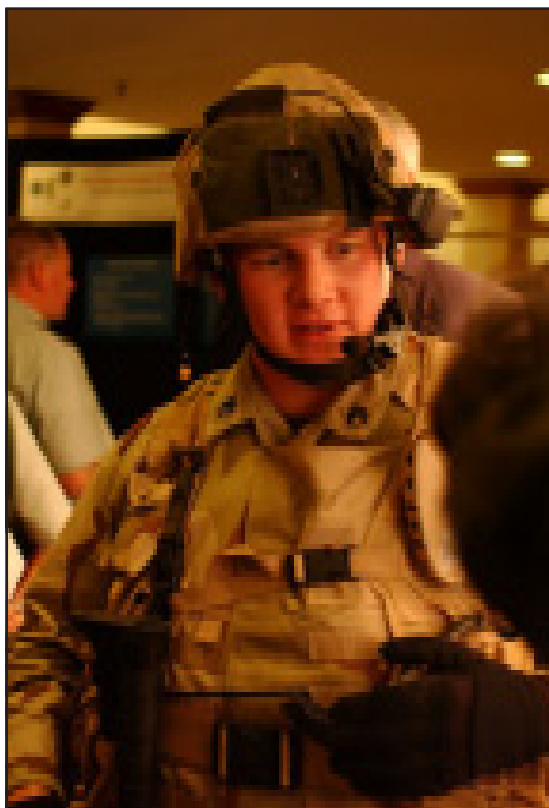
Towering over the audience while on stage, Davis held the M-4 rifle and pointed out key features on the weapon that do not come standard to the basic infantryman in the field. The LW's M-4 is outfitted with a daylight video scope that allows the Soldier to take digital photos and record video.

This weapon feature goes one step further. The weapon plugs into the LW's Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment vest (MOLLE), which feeds the image into the 3-inch Helmet Mounted Display monitor. The HMD situated over Davis' left eye and attached to his Kevlar helmet packs the same resolution as a 17-inch monitor. The connection between the daylight video scope and the HMD gives the Soldier the extra advantage to see and shoot at the enemy around corners.

Davis said, in an interview before the conference, the good things to take away from the LW is its ability to not expose the Soldier to enemy fire, while having the ability to still complete the mission.

The MOLLE vest for the LW acts like Batman's utility belt, which houses a heavy percentage of the caped crusader's gadgets. The MOLLE vest, according to the Program Executive Office Soldier website, is a load carrying vest, worn over the LW's body armor, with mul-





**Staff Sgt. Andrew D. Davis takes time to answer individual questions about the prototype Land Warrior Uniform.**

multiple packs, pouches, a Tubular Hydration System and much more.

Aside from the MOLLE vest's regular features, the vest holds the bulk that composes the overall high tech make-up of the LW. The LW's MOLLE vest has a small wireless computer loaded with Windows XP technology along with a 500-megahertz processor. The vest also has a Global Positioning System with antenna, a wireless land antenna and a Soldier control system that performs like a typical mouse on a laptop or desktop computer.

Another device that is implemented to the LW is a microphone with an earpiece to keep in contact with other Soldiers in the field while running missions.

Apart from the sophisticated modules that form the LW, the one living component, 22-year-old Davis from St. Peters, Minn., had more insight on the LW than just elements that contrive the suit.

"Primarily, I travel and demo this to VIPs and companies that work on building it, and stuff like that, but I also throw my two cents in," Davis said.

Davis said he comes from the infantry. His statement is backed up with experience he acquired from the 3/75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion, two tours in Afghanistan

and one tour in Iraq. The two cents that he throws in, as he said, is his opinion backed by his knowledge on what can make the LW better.

"It's too heavy. It's too heavy of a system. The system itself is a great idea. I mean it helps with your situational awareness on the battlefield command and control, communications, and your accuracy of fire along with survivability is definitely increased," said Davis.

The weight issue, said Davis, comes from the two batteries on the back of the MOLLE vest that powers the suit. Each battery lasts roughly eight hours. Davis also pointed out the LW computer temperature gets up to 120 degrees and can add heat for Soldiers operating in the 140 degrees Iraq environment.

The LW suit is just the first phase of improving a Soldier's ability to accomplish a mission. Davis said the next stage in the evolution of the infantryman is the Objective Force Warrior. "The Objective Force Warrior that's coming out in 2010 looks like Starship Troopers. This here (the LW) is just the beginning of all that."



**Staff Sgt. Andrew D. Davis displays the prototype Land Warrior Uniform while talking about the abilities and functions of the Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment vest.**

# Riches! Filthy, Filthy Riches!



Photo by Staff Sgt. Noreen Feeney, 318th Public Affairs Det.

**Story by Capt. Tracey Golden**  
318<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Det., Forest Park, Ill.

There are more than 150,000 Soldiers in Iraq, most of them manning checkpoints, running convoys or guarding posts. Standard military stuff. Just about any Soldier can handle it. Same thing day in and day out, almost as routine as any job in the States. Of these 150,000 Soldiers however, seven very lucky ones were witness to something so rare and so historical only a few would *ever* see it.

Staff Sgt. Noreen Feeney, 318<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Det., had a real chance of a lifetime when she was the only still photographer, military or civilian, allowed to view and photograph the priceless treasure of King Nimrud as it was uncovered in a bank vault in Baghdad, Iraq, last June.

"They (the Iraqis) would not even let National Geo-

graphic down here," said Feeney. "I cannot believe I got to see such a great thing."

The treasures of King Nimrud, circa 1000 B.C., were discovered in Iraq in 1988. The treasure towers in comparison over King Tut's cache. Nimrud's treasure trove overall is actually priceless. The National Iraqi museum had the gold pieces on display for only two years when the first Persian Gulf War began. They were packed away and hidden from the world in the vault of the Central Bank of Iraq in Baghdad.

"I was told they wanted to hide them from Saddam Hussein, but I don't know if that is true, all I know is that they definitely wanted nobody to find them," Feeney related.

The story behind the treasure is amazing itself. According to Feeney, when looters tore into the bank to see what they could pilfer, they apparently did not know what was down in one of the bank's three vaults. The robbers

were apparently looking for money when they tried to pry open the door of the first vault without success. They shot a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) at the door of the second vault which bounced off and killed them all (the bodies were discovered by American Soldiers shortly after the war).

It is unclear to Feeney who flooded the vault with sewer water, but doing so is what seemed to have chased off any further looters. That is how the vault remained until the war was officially over, flooded with sewer water up to the ceiling.

A team of museum curators/Army reservists with a civil affairs unit were sent to see about the treasure. No one, not even the National Iraqi Museum curator, knew if the treasure survived the war or the flood.

It was important to the Iraqi curators to keep everything about the treasure quiet until things were settled in Baghdad. The museum employees were afraid of losing this valuable fortune as the Baghdad Museum had lost so many of their prized possessions. There were absolutely no media allowed to enter the bank, including photographers from National Geographic Explorer who were inter-

ested in getting an exclusive for their TV show.

"I was grateful to Capt. Jacoff (Capt. Jeff Jacoff, 318<sup>th</sup> Public Af-

**"Was it smelly!," exclaimed Feeney, wrinkling her nose. "I'm so glad I was smart enough to grab one of those surgical masks a captain gave me earlier. The odor alone probably kept everyone out. The sewer water even stained my BDUs."**

fairs Det. and Public Affairs officer for the Finance Ministry) for assigning this to me. Being one of only a handful of people allowed to see if the treasure is there *and* take pictures of it is something even the best professional photojournalists will never get to do," Feeney admitted.

With the utmost secrecy and non-chalance one could muster in the middle of Baghdad, Feeney went down into the foul-smelling vault with four Iraqi curators and five civil affairs officers working with the Culture Ministry to open the vault.

"Was it smelly!," exclaimed Feeney, wrinkling her nose. "I'm so glad I was smart enough to grab one of those surgical masks a captain gave me earlier. The odor alone probably kept everyone out. The sewer water even stained my BDUs."

Within minutes of the door being unlocked for the first time in two decades, it was quickly determined that the trunks containing the treasure were still secure. The uncertainty lay with the condition of the pieces.

"They lifted these cardboard boxes out of the trunks, and the sewer wa



**The head curator of the National Iraqi Museum tells Ambassador J. Paul Bremer about the discovery of the treasures of King Nimrud. The pieces of the treasure were hidden from Saddam Hussein and only recently uncovered.**

*Photo by Staff Sgt. Noreen Feeney, 318th Public Affairs Det.*



ter came pouring out,” said Feeney. “I couldn’t believe anything would be salvageable.”

One by one, the Iraqis pulled boxes out of the wood trunks, pouring the water out to unveil the beautiful jewels and stones lying within.

“Some of the belongings of the last King of Iraq did not survive, pictures and letters and such, but everything else did because it was made of stone or gold,” explained Feeney. “That stuff cleans up easily.”

Feeney saw the Iraqi women come to tears and nearly collapse when they opened a special crate and discovered the country’s most prized possession still intact.

“I was six inches shorter than everyone else in the vault. I couldn’t see what they were making a fuss over. All I saw was a mannequin head,” Feeney said laughingly. “Now what was so special about a mannequin? They didn’t have plastic 3,000 years ago. I just didn’t get it. One of the colonels eventually hoisted me on to the top of the crate to take the pictures as he jokingly informed me to what was *on* the mannequin, not the mannequin itself. It turned out to be a very special necklace and headdress, but I could not find out the details of why they were so special.

“I thought the 4,000-year-old necklace was beyond belief itself, but there was something even more unique about that headdress. The only information I could find out about it was in Arabic though.”

The last crate held all the gold, including the crowns of King Nimrud and his wife.

“I can’t believe they let me touch it; nobody ever lets you touch that stuff,” exclaimed Feeney. “I also can’t believe I didn’t get a picture of me touching it either! When they pulled out the 2,000-year-old crystal jars, I flatly refused to touch them, let alone hold them. I’m not going to take a chance breaking something that old.”

According to Feeney, the treasured artifacts were pulled out of the containers and hastily dried off and resealed in dry containers to be stored until they could be cleaned. The Iraqi curators decided to clean off the best of the King’s treasures and display them for the media and Ambassador J. Paul Bremer. Feeney was also invited to that event.

“It was great to see them on display. Of course, they looked better the second time around,” said

Feeney.

The displayed pieces were shown in the Baghdad museum for only one day and then they were packed back up and secreted away, perhaps never to be seen by the public ever again.

The story of the finding, hiding and rediscovery of the treasures of King Nimrud were the subject of a National Geographic Ultimate Explorer episode that aired on

MSNBC October 5, 2003. Much to Staff Sgt. Feeney’s surprise, the ending scene of the show has her in the vault of the Central Bank of Iraq with her hands on the 3,000 year old crown of King Nimrud.

**“I can’t believe they let me touch it; nobody ever lets you touch that stuff,” exclaimed Feeney. “I also can’t believe I didn’t get a picture of me touching it either!”**



**Staff Sgt. Noreen Feeney, a print and photo journalist with the 318th Public Affairs Det., takes a break from the smell of sewage inside the vault.**

*Photo by Spc. Daniel Symonds, 318th Public Affairs Det.*

# When Given Lemons Make Lemonade

By Mike Walton  
88<sup>th</sup> RRC Public Affairs  
Office

Army Reserve Soldiers face a myriad of challenges when they are deployed. They are forced to leave behind steady jobs, friends and loved ones, and often times Soldiers from an assortment of backgrounds and locales are thrown together to bring a unit up to strength.

Such was the case of the 855<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company out of South Bend, Ind. The 855<sup>th</sup> was mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with a total of 110 Soldiers, 78 came from other units. Thus the 855<sup>th</sup> arrived at its mobilization station, Fort McCoy, Wis., with Soldiers from 60 different cities and nine states.

As Capt. Dan Hingst, commander, of the 855<sup>th</sup> explained; "The unit mobilized a group of mostly strangers."

There was a method to this madness, however. When the 855<sup>th</sup> went through its Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP), which determines the deployability of both individuals and units, it was determined that the 855<sup>th</sup> needed more Soldiers to better perform its mission. Therefore, Soldiers with job skills related to the quartermaster field were cross-leveled and assigned to the 855<sup>th</sup>.

The Soldiers of the 855<sup>th</sup> met the challenge of living and working with numerous complete strangers head on.

"Meeting 110 new people, that you never knew, and getting split up to make teams of 15 was quite an experience," said Spc. Steven Towery of Nebraska.

"The personalities and different backgrounds of the others made me have to stop and think about if I was in their place in order to understand their opinions and ideas.

"We are all different, but we can all be the same. If we come together, we can get any job done to complete any mission," said Towery.

Capt. Hingst said once they hit the ground in Iraq, the Soldiers of the 855<sup>th</sup> wasted little time in making an im-



**Soldiers of the 855<sup>th</sup> worked 'outside the box' by providing security in addition the duties they had trained for.**

*Photo donated by 855<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company*

pression on the men and women they were supporting. The Soldiers of the 855<sup>th</sup> originally provided laundry, bath and clothing repair services to Soldiers in the field, and when the need for their services slowed, they found themselves manning the guard towers for entire base camps. The 855<sup>th</sup> also persevered despite one of its sleep tents going up in flames.

"The high point of the mobilization came in late May," Hingst said. "That's when we observed every element

of the company being gainfully employed in its wartime mission." Hingst added that his Soldiers received many compliments for their professionalism and the high quality of the services provided.

Like any large group of diverse people forced to live in tight quarters, the 855<sup>th</sup> hasn't been free of disputes and altercations, but they proved to be just a minor bump on the way to completing the mission.

"We had our share of disagreements and arguments, but the Soldiers always got the job done one way or another," said Sgt. Jason Seberger of Nebraska.

The Soldiers of the 855<sup>th</sup> are still in Iraq and not sure when they will call the U.S. home again. This lack of finality can prove to be quite frustrating as Spc. Scott Brothers of Minnesota pointed out. "The worst thing about this deployment is not knowing when we're going home," he said. "The rumors about going home never stop."

One of those rumors came true and the 855<sup>th</sup> hopped on a freedom bird headed for the U.S. Getting home on April 22nd, 2004, Soldiers of the 855<sup>th</sup> can be proud of the way they came together, despite their differences, to accomplish the mission and make the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command proud. Staff Sgt. Joaquin Wilson of Cincinnati put it best, "Even though we all came from different cultures and life-styles, we have learned to bond and care for one another like brother and sister."

# Anatomy of a Battalion

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Chris Farley  
88th RRC, Det. 1, Public Affairs Office

An Army unit's framework is made up of various Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). A unit thrives on its individual Soldiers' innumerable kinds of military trades, much like a vital organ in a human that keeps its body alive. Each job keeps the unit's pulse rhythmically healthy, alive and capable in completing its mission. But what happens when the mission demands the company to split up in a range of different areas scattered all about in the operational scope of a deployment?

This question was posed and answered by the 785<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion from Fraser, Mich., when the battalion mobilized in October of 2002.

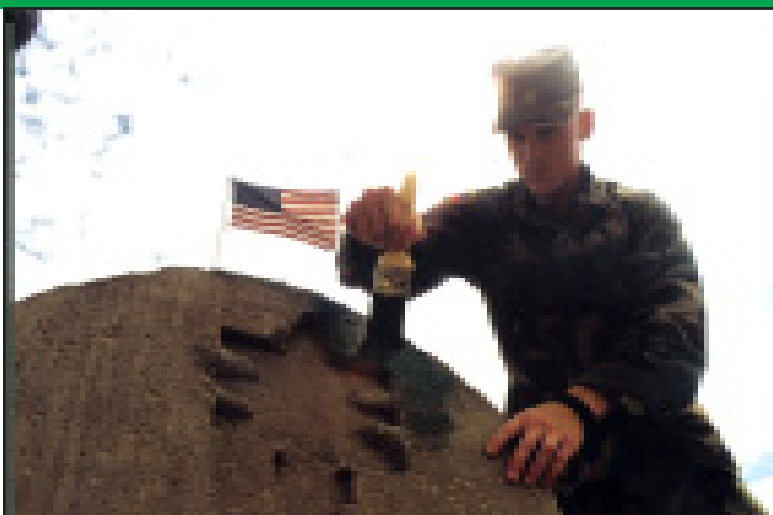
In the instance of the human body, the body can't sustain itself without being a whole. This leads to its life ceasing.

Instead of the battalion flat lining and being concerned with its survival, the reserve unit had to fight to keep its identity. It was a waging struggle for the 785<sup>th</sup> to keep its integrity in a deployment that didn't allow its Soldiers to work side by side, like they trained, for the battalion's real world mission.

For its mission, the destination was unknown for nine months as the unit was held in an alert status before getting mobilization orders. "We were on alert from January 8<sup>th</sup> of 0-2, just a few months after September 11<sup>th</sup> (2001)," said Capt. Andrew Q. Hoffman, commander of the Headquarters Headquarters Company of the 785<sup>th</sup>. "We finally knew exactly when we were going to get mobilized on September 11<sup>th</sup> of 0-2."

The 785<sup>th</sup> deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and became the third rotation to augment into the Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF GTMO, pronounced git-mo). The JTF GTMO's mission called on the 785<sup>th</sup> to help safeguard Americans and allies from future terrorist attacks by helping with the responsibilities for the detention of al-Qaeda and Taliban enemy combatants seized in the Global War on Terrorism held at Camp Delta.

"This is the only facility like it the world. This is probably the first time we've had such a blend of detention and intelligence because the primary mission here is intelligence gathering," said Maj. Brian K. Numerick, the op-



Cpl. Eric L. Hamlin, an interior electrician with the 785<sup>th</sup>, adds color to the lasting monument that marks the 785<sup>th</sup>'s presence in Guantanamo Bay.

erations officer for 785<sup>th</sup>. However, in his deployed capacity, Numerick was the operations officer for the Joint Detention Operations Group.

The 785<sup>th</sup>'s mission and presence didn't stop with aiding in the day-to-day management of detainees at Camp Delta. The overall spectrum of the mission had all reservists not only working with numerous branches of military services and civilian agencies, but it also had the battalion's Soldiers assigned in various jobs all over the island.

"We were hell bent on keeping our troops all together. It was very awkward coming into a joint environment to where even though we came as a battalion, we would be all split up in every direction and the reason for that is we have valuable resources," said the 785<sup>th</sup>'s 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Joseph N. Haddad.

"Our motto 'Stand and Deliver' boomed like I have never heard it before," said Staff Sgt. Albert E. Lamont as he recalled the last formation the entire battalion had when the reservists just arrived in Cuba.

"I was filled with pride because it wasn't just the fact we were actually there, but because it was our time to show the world we were there to stand our ground and deliver a promise to do our best for GOD and Country," said Lamont.

Not only would Soldiers from the battalion face working in different environments without unit camaraderie, but Soldiers living quarters would be in different locations. The Soldiers that were military police officers and worked behind the wire lining the outer limits of Camp Delta lived at Camp America, Camp America North, or



Camp Buckley, base camps surrounding the detainee prison camp. Other Soldiers were located in housing developments a couple miles outside the secured area encompassing Camp Delta.

Hoffman said, the battalion was told at their mobilization station, Fort Dix, New Jersey, the JTF GTMO lived and died by a joint manning document. "I don't think any one of us realized that not only was everyone going to work in a slot but physically they were going to take those people away from us and put them into some other command. Without giving them any written orders or anything else those people were basically taken away from our company and told they work for somebody else."

Hoffman also said the battalion had several Soldiers stay at Fort Dix because the Soldiers possessed much needed personnel skills. Other than having Soldiers stateside and in Cuba, four other Soldiers mobilized with the 21<sup>st</sup> Theatre Support Command in Germany. "The 785<sup>th</sup> has Soldiers on two continents and Cuba. So it's interesting for our Soldiers."

For MOSs, the battalion is composed of 50 percent military police. Haddad said the other half of the battalion's jobs were cooks, supply and logistics, construction, repair and utility Soldiers, administration and others. "We have a wide variety of MOSs. You might call them lower density MOSs," said Haddad.

To keep the vibrant identity alive of the scattered battalion, a central command post and orderly room were established. Outside the orderly room the battalion prominently displayed its guidon. The guidon posted outside in front of the wooden framed sea hut wasn't just for the Soldiers, it was also to show the task force where every Soldier came from and who they were. Soldiers from the battalion that needed anything could visit or call their orderly room seven days a week.

With Soldiers working and living all over the island, the battalion also focused on keeping all the Soldiers current with important information, but most of all this crucial focus illustrated to all 785<sup>th</sup> reservists what their leaders were preaching to them at Fort Dix.

"We preached to the Soldiers for two months before we got here that no matter where you are and no matter

how you're used, remember you're always a member of the 785<sup>th</sup> and if you need anything you come back to us," said Haddad.

The two tools that the unit found invaluable with the dissemination of vital information were the internet and two battalion newsletters that were sent by e-mail to all 785<sup>th</sup> Soldiers, The Blotter and The Vine.

By keeping in constant communications with all Soldiers, the 785<sup>th</sup> was able to maintain unit cohesion and retain its identity with every Soldier, but on a grander scale, the Soldiers of the 785<sup>th</sup> found that their presence was felt throughout the JTF.

The 785<sup>th</sup> mechanics kept over 150 military and over 350 civilian vehicles running at a 96 percent vehicle readiness for the JTF. The Soldiers that were logistical specialists were assigned to take charge of the JTF's J-4

warehouse. These Soldiers received and handled all the supplies for the JTF to include items for the enemy combatants detained at Camp Delta.

The military police element that composes half of the battalion worked inside Camp Delta with other military police battalions. The MP battalion's involvement with the detention camp didn't end there. The 785<sup>th</sup> had crucial players involved with the Joint Detention Operations Group (JDOG).

One of those key players was Lt. Col. Stephen S. Stewart, the battalion commander for the 785<sup>th</sup>, who was the deputy commander of the JDOG. Stewart said the JDOG is responsible for handling the guarding of, security for, and intelligence gathering of al-Qaeda and Taliban detainees in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Before leaving Cuba, the Soldiers of the 785<sup>th</sup> would get together for the first time in a long time at their victory dinner. "Every other unit has been together the whole time, so its like 'sergeant so and so and private snuffy how are you doing?' (For) Us it's going to be more of like an almost homecoming before our homecoming," said Cpl. Eric L. Hamlin, an interior electrician with the 785<sup>th</sup>.

The 785<sup>th</sup> redeployed to home station in early September of 2003. The battalion returned home intact, together, and whole body, as the battalion deployed in the beginning.



**Behind this fence the Joint Detention Operations Group houses enemy combatants from all over the world. Camp Delta has a capacity of up to 800 enemy combatants.**

# Family Academy: Assignment: Readiness

Story and photo by Staff  
Sgt. Chris Farley  
88th RRC, Det. 1, Public  
Affairs Office

In a conference room turned classroom at the Somerset Inn, the class stands divided during a lesson taught at the 88th Regional Readiness Command's Family Program Academy weekend.

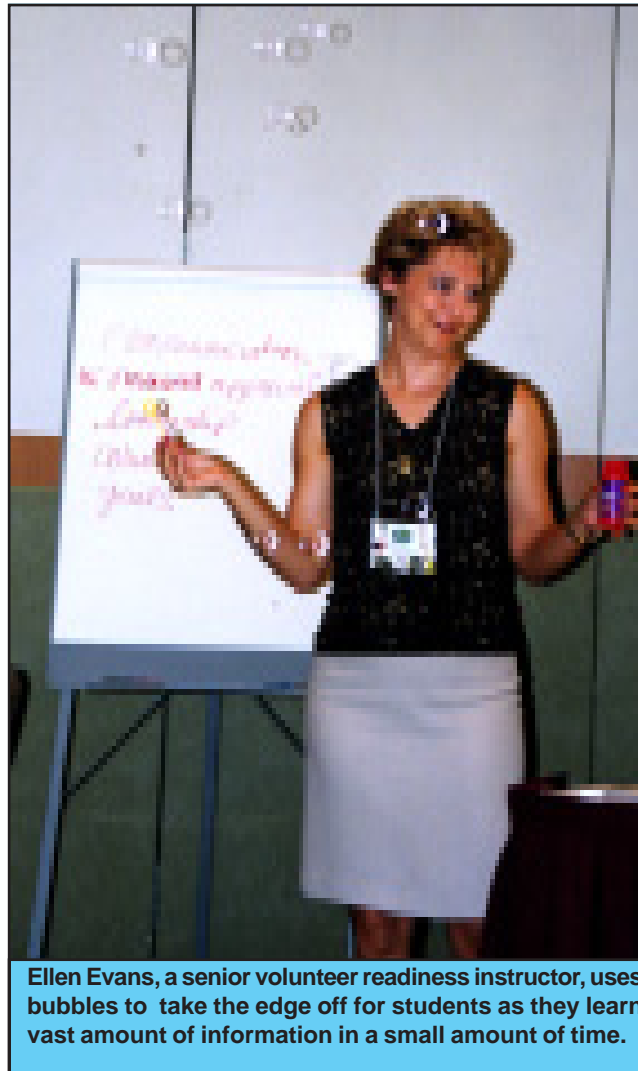
Rather than sitting at tables for this specific lesson, half the students in class, a blend of civilian and Soldiers, stand aligned with their backs to a wall. The other half of the class stands on the adjacent side of the room facing the other side.

In each standing line, like in an adolescent game of "I have a secret", one person leans over to another. With cuffed hands around their mouths and around the other person's closest ear, they begin to pass on a whispered message from the person before.

"The main purpose of this was to show how information can get confused if you don't write it down or if you don't pay attention," said Gaquilla Hunter-Skinner, a new Family Group Leader for the 1st Brigade of the 333rd Regiment of the 84th Division in Flint, MI.

For this lesson, Telephone Tree - Give It A Ring, the class instructor demonstrates for her students the problems that could occur when constantly passing information by word of mouth from one person to another. A lesson that all students learned is the value of writing down information and repeating it to the person sending the message when using this message relay process. And paying attention to keeping information clear and accurate during this time of heavy deployments of Soldiers overseas is very important.

This class was one lesson in 11 that new students were



Ellen Evans, a senior volunteer readiness instructor, uses bubbles to take the edge off for students as they learn vast amount of information in a small amount of time.

taught during the academy weekend. The school's doors opened early for the approximately 180 students on Saturday July 19th and ended with their graduation from the academy on Sunday July 20th.

The course structure at the Family Program Academy is designed to teach students on how to establish a strong and successful Family Readiness Program at the unit level. To achieve this goal the school teaches the family readiness group members on how to help themselves and family members to become self-reliant. A focus of the program is to show students what their resources are and how to access them.

"We do a lot of training. Our training is designed for those people that have a role in the unit's Family Readiness Program," said Bob Russell, Family Readiness Director for the 88th RRC.

The key volunteer positions that establish the make-up of the FRG are the group leader, the secretary, the treasurer, the publicist, the calling tree coordinator, and the volunteer who does the news letter. Each family readiness group also has a Family Readiness Liaison. The FRL is appointed by the commander of the supporting unit and is the commander's representative for the family readiness program group. The FRL also assists the commander in establishing and maintaining the FRG.

Ellen Evans, a senior volunteer readiness instructor with the academy, dips a wand into a plastic bottle of bubbles she holds and blows a stream of large and small bubbles during her class. Evans uses the bubbles as a distracter to breakup any tension that occurs during her lesson on "Organizing Your Family Readiness Group For Success."

Evans says her class can be stressful for students be-

cause of the large amounts of information taught in this class. "There is not a lot of opportunity to keep the class light because it's just very heavy with information. It's fantastic information because they have to start somewhere but there are lots of acronyms, lots of numbers, lots of publications, USARC Regulation 608-1 (The Family Readiness Handbook) and on and on to learn."

The Academy weekend wasn't solely dedicated to instruction. Time was taken for the attendees to ask 88th RRC representatives questions and state concerns they had during a town hall style meeting.

Sundee Webster, Co-Chairperson for the 762nd TC Company from Akron, Ohio, said, "A constant thing people will say to us is, I thought the war was over. Why isn't your spouse coming home?" Webster also said, since all the reporters have left and there is a decline in news reporting, people believe the hostilities to be over in Iraq.

Col. David J. Grovum, G-1 deputy chief of staff, acting as a representative for Brig. Gen. Michael W. Beasley, commanding general for the 88th RRC, said to Webster and all of the attending family readiness students, "Every chance I get, I tell people, you loved them when they were here, you loved them on the way out, you loved them over there, boy-you got to love them when they come home." Grovum also said, we can't let people forget about our deployed troops.

During the meeting, Bobbie Beasley, Brig. Gen. Beasley's wife, wrote down concerns and questions that were brought up by the group. She said her involvement with the Family Program has been to just encourage people to participate in the unit Family Readiness Program. She also said, "Having been in the system long enough and being through several deployments with my husband, I kind of watch and see, with a little bit of experience, what the people are

going through. I try and encourage them to take advantage of all the opportunities they have to educate themselves because you're happier when you know what's going on."

On the final day of the academy, Brig.Gen. Beasley talked to the academy members and handed out awards. Both Frank Amaro a FRG Leader for the 318th Press Camp and the 6015th Garrison Support Unit and John Miller a senior resource volunteer were awarded the U.S. Army Reserve Volunteer of the Year Award.

The award spotlights outstanding family readiness volunteers that have volunteered over 50 hours of time that has had a dramatic impact on family readiness in the 12-month nomination period.

"Getting the mission done is more important than the awards and the ribbons," said Amaro.

Miller said, after winning the award, "Work hard, love the people you're working with."

## A Word From the Commanding General

**By Brig. Gen. Michael W. Beasley**

(This originally appeared in the first edition of the 88th's Family Readiness Newsletter.)

As I address our "Blue Devil" Soldiers and families in this inaugural edition of our Family Readiness Newsletter, we are in the midst of a new alert, and impending mobilization for more Soldiers of the 88th Regional Readiness Command. These Soldiers will perform duties in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo and other key areas in the Nation's War on Terrorism.

Additionally, as in past deployments, the 88th RRC will be sending several hundred Soldiers outside of our Command to join other deploying Army Reserve units in need of our demonstrated skills and experience.

We in the Command Group, and the entire leadership of the Army, are acutely aware of the hardships, sacrifices and noble patriotism required by these critical missions in support of our Nation's security. Our new Army Chief of Staff, General Peter Schoomaker, has called upon us all to demonstrate, train to and live a "Warrior Ethos." The trying days ahead will continue to underscore and

emphasize this continuing and difficult undertaking.

I remain amazed and gratified at the superb service and marvelous accomplishments of our fighting (and peace building) men and women in the war zones. Their bravery, dedication and extraordinary service in a variety of difficult tasks has reflected the truly heroic efforts of all citizens-Soldiers during these recent conflicts.

We still are receiving occasionally the tragic messages informing us of our Soldiers and friends who have been killed or wounded in action, or who are being evacuated because of illness or accidental injury. Our hearts and prayers are extended to these Soldiers, our comrades in arms, and their families, who have sacrificed the most.

I look forward to this newsletter serving as a means of better communications between this Command and our Family Readiness Team in the field: a way of keeping you timely and fully informed of developments and policies affecting our worldwide deployed Soldiers.

God Bless you all, and Good Bless America. And thank you for your extraordinary service to our Nation.

# 88<sup>th</sup> RRC Soldiers off to war with the STRYKER Brigade

By Sgt. 1st Class Susanne Aspley  
88th RRC Public Affairs Office

Soldiers from the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command recently deployed to Kuwait with the Army's first Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, based at Fort Lewis, Wash.

The two Blue Devil units are the 724<sup>th</sup> Trans Co. from Bartonville, Ill., and the 401<sup>st</sup> Transportation Co. from Battle Creek, Mich.

Maj. Stephen Olson, Operations Officer, 88<sup>th</sup> RRC, said the Soldiers went to Fort Lewis, Washington and spent two months training for normal validation, then another month for unique validation.

According to the US Army's website, the SBCT is designed to bridge the gap between the Army's light and heavy forces. The unit provides combatant commanders increased operational and tactical flexibility. The Stryker, an eight-wheeled medium weight armored vehicle, is the SBCT's primary combat and combat support platform. Significantly lighter and more transportable than existing tanks and armored vehicles, the Stryker fulfills an immediate requirement to equip a strategically and tactically deployable brigade, capable of rapid movement worldwide.

"It's very rare for a Reservist to link up with their Command and Control element before being deployed overseas. Our Soldiers were integrated, then deployed with their active duty counterparts. Normally reservists deploy overseas, then hook up with their AC counterparts.

It was a very smooth transition."

The Stryker vehicle is named after two Soldiers who were awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

Following are excerpts from their actions:

## **Robert F. Stryker**

Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division. Near Loc Ninh, Republic of Vietnam, 7 November 1967. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Spc. Stryker, U.S. Army, distinguished himself while serving with Company C. Stryker was serving as a grenadier in a multi-company reconnaissance in force near Loc Ninh. As his unit moved through the dense underbrush, it was suddenly met with a hail of rocket, automatic weapons and small arms fire from enemy forces. Reacting quickly, Stryker fired into the enemy positions with his grenade launcher. Undaunted by the enemy machine gun fire, Stryker repeatedly fired grenades into the trees, killing enemy snipers. He then saw several wounded squad members in the killing zone of an enemy claymore mine. With complete disregard for his safety, he threw himself upon the mine as it was detonated. He was killed as his body absorbed the blast and shielded his comrades from the explosion. His unselfish actions were responsible for saving the lives of at least 6 of his fellow Soldiers.

## **Stuart S. Stryker**

Private First Class, U.S. Army, Company E, 513th Parachute Infantry, 17th Airborne Division. Near Wesel, Germany, 24 March 1945. Citation. He was a platoon runner, when the unit assembled near Wesel, Germany. While attacking along a railroad, one platoon made a frontal assault but was pinned down by intense fire from a house after advancing only 50 yards. So badly stricken, it could not return fire, the platoon was at the mercy of German machine gunners when Pfc. Stryker voluntarily left a place of comparative safety, armed with a carbine, ran to the head of the unit. In full view of the enemy and under fire, he exhorted the men to get to their feet and follow him. Inspired by his fearlessness, they rushed after him. 25 yards from the objective, Stryker was killed by the enemy fusillades. His gallant actions so encouraged his comrades and diverted the enemy's attention that other elements of the company were able to surround the house, capturing more than 200 hostile Soldiers and able to free three members of an American bomber crew held prisoner there.



Stryker armored vehicles line up at the port before being loaded onto ships.  
*US Army photo.*



# It's good to be a Soldier...



Members of the 652nd Engineer Company disembark at Volk Field in central Wisconsin following almost a year of duty in Iraq. They unloaded their gear and boarded trucks for the 25-mile trip to Fort McCoy. While at McCoy, Soldiers will undergo a medical exam, have several debriefings and receive counseling on the transition back into civilian life.

*Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Farley, 88th RRC Public Affairs Office.*

## Hero Miles

House representative C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D), Md., developed the program, “Operation Hero Miles” to assist our deployed troops in getting home to see their families and loved ones. The program enables individuals to donate their frequent flyer miles to show their support to our troops. A number of major airlines are supporting this program and it’s simple to use.

Just go to the website [www.heromiles.org](http://www.heromiles.org), choose your Frequent Flyer airline, enter your Frequent Flyer membership number, enter the miles you want to donate and press enter. It’s that easy. The Operation Hero Miles site gives additional detail on the program’s administration and successes. Pass this on to friends and neighbors looking for ways to Support Our Troops.

## Activated Reservists Benefits

Military.com reminds Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers who have been called to active duty that they are covered under the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Civil Relief Act (SSCRA). Some of the SSCRA’s basic relief provisions are in the areas of lease termination, rent and eviction protection, life and medical insurance coverage, and Installment Contracts and Mortgage Foreclosures.

In addition, active duty servicemembers who have incurred loans or debt prior to entering service will not be obligated to pay an interest rate in excess of 6 percent. If you are on active duty and are currently paying more than a 6 percent interest rate on a debt you incurred prior to activation, you should notify your lender that you are on active duty. For more information on SSCRA’s relief provisions, visit

[http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourceFileView?file=Active\\_Benefits\\_Relief.htm](http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourceFileView?file=Active_Benefits_Relief.htm)

## American Airlines Opens Admiral Clubs to Servicemembers

American Airlines is now inviting U.S. military men and women under the Iraqi Freedom Rest and Relaxation (R&R) Program to spend time between flights at American’s elegant Admirals Club facilities worldwide. At airports where there is no USO, returning servicemen and women in uniform or with military ID can enter the clubs free of charge to wait for their flights, enjoy complimentary snacks and soft drinks, watch TV, use the Internet or just stretch out and relax. The program starts today and runs for the duration of the R&R program. For more information, see

[http://www.amrcorp.com/news/december03/12\\_military.htm](http://www.amrcorp.com/news/december03/12_military.htm).

# Combat Stress: What's It To Me?

By Master Sgt. Janet M. Jones  
88th RRC Public Affairs Office

When many hear the term 'combat stress' the visualization of the emotional struggles of a Soldier who has been in extensive and disturbing frontline combat may come to mind. So, to many Soldiers, this information just does not have personal significance.

This, in part, is why the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command (RRC) includes the term 'operational' in its Combat & Operational Stress Control (COSC) group. This program, a relatively recent addition to the surgeon's office, has developed coping strategies to meet a variety of needs for 88th Soldiers and their families.

Stress is defined as "a mentally or emotionally disruptive pressure or strain", according to The American Heritage Dictionary. One may be affected by stress on physical, cognitive and emotional levels. While one suffers from various levels of stress in various situations throughout the life span, it is not an illness, but a vital part of life. Realistically, stress is present not only in the lives of Soldiers, but in the daily lives of all breathing organisms. The goal for a healthy life-style should be that one learns to cope with and even enjoy stress. A worthy goal, but how does one go about accomplishing this?

According to Lt. Col. Mary W. Erickson, in the surgeon's office of the 88<sup>th</sup> RRC, "we need to communicate so that we don't paddle our boat in circles. If a storm comes, we need to strategize and understand how to work together, understand our common focus. Bringing people together, not alone, strategies."

Communication is a key element of the COSC program, developed in large part here by Medical Plans Officer, Lt. Col. David L. Parker. Based on a 1999 DoD directive (6490.5) on combat stress control programs, Parker and Col. Robert G. Evans co-championed the conceptual plan and applied for initial program funding in the spring of 2000, then organized a group of experts to brainstorm ways to make the program operational. "Everyone needed to do the same thing in all RRCs. This was an opportunity to find a new paradigm," said Parker.

Col. James W. Stokes, psychiatrist and Combat Stress Control Officer at headquarters Medical Command, was instrumental in moving forward the national

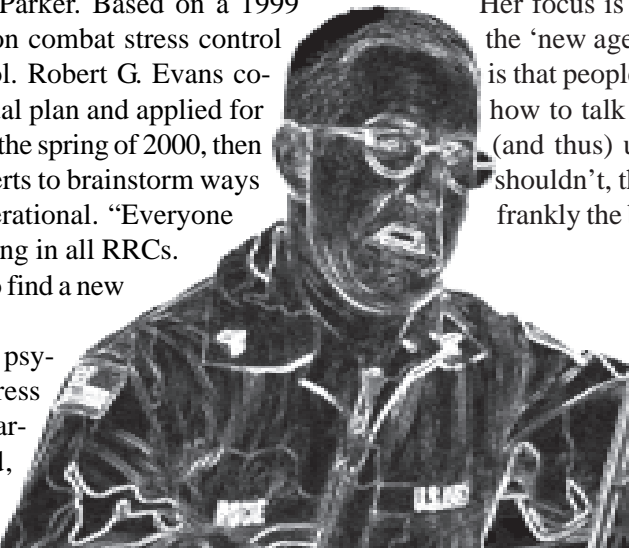
acceptance of the program and networking it with the active Army component. Stokes also serves as combat stress control subject matter expert to the surgeon general.

Breakthrough recognition of the program's vital applications came with the disastrous events of 9-11. "If we hadn't gone to war, we would still be in the training mode" stated Parker. The pilot program was quickly incorporated into the mobilization process and family readiness briefings. That led to the recognition of a functional connection among the combat operational stress program, the work of chaplains and family readiness resources. The importance and relevance of the application led to the activation of two combat/operational stress control officers: (Lt. Cols.) Mary W. Erickson, director of clinical education in Occupational Therapy at the University of Minnesota, and Susan S. Whiteaker, licensed independent clinical social worker with a speciality in children and families.

One reason the program is so valuable to Soldiers is that "If you feel you're being cared for you can take more stress and pain, have more inner strength. We need to look after our spiritual and physical well being as well as emotional. It's the inner strength and fortitude that people can muster- they just have to realize it. This is the power of support groups. The answer is within, but together with others of common purpose" said Erickson.

Whiteaker's deployment took her from a successful private practice where she worked directly with family issues in their homes, interacting with people, their communication and behavior. She said case referrals are often initiated due to children's problems, but finds that they are generally tied to problems in the parents' marriage.

Her focus is on a quick solution, what she calls the 'new age of brief therapy.' "The issues I see is that people do not know how to communicate, how to talk to each other. No one teaches this, (and thus) under stress people say things they shouldn't, they go too far. I address quickly and frankly the behavior and the thinking behind the behavior. This allows people to substitute new thinking for their behavior," said Whiteaker. Training them with new communication tools teaches them "what else you can do" to more effectively communicate under stress.



Whiteaker said there are two main types of stress: acute stress, which is transient, and long term stress. The latter takes a toll on your body, affecting hormones and ultimately wearing down the organ system, causing depression.

The behavioral cues, Whiteaker said, are easily misread. "Children, in particular, deal with stress in a more primitive way than adults. Often adults don't recognize (the children's behavior) for what it is- such as aggressive behavior. Children are designed to want to please adults. If they are unable to do that, it's not because they are choosing that behavior, but they don't understand what else to do." Whiteaker's interaction helps adults ease the animosity toward that behavior and allows them to be more understanding. These tactics are designed to teach how to avoid arguments, how to talk to each other with the goal of working from the present to the future rather than dwelling on the past.

Her approach has been melded into the current COSC briefing given to families and Soldiers returning from deployment in how to deal with the expected and unexpected behavioral issues in the home. Whiteaker said that merely "recognizing the cues that people give is often the first step in how to solve it."

The COSC program now offers tremendous potential value to the well-being of Soldiers and families. Erickson said, "Prior to February 2003, the (88<sup>th</sup>) RRC had no behavioral health professionals to coordinate and offer services. They realized they needed to pull others together and coordinate services." To help broadcast their message, the COSC group has developed brochures to foster understanding of how to work together in dealing with family needs and managing stress for Soldiers and their family members. The group addresses dealing with such challenges as short mobilization notification, needs and issues of remaining family members and lack of local community support.

In September 2003 they developed and hosted the '88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command Combat and Operational Stress Control Conference: Providing Deployment Cycle Behavioral Health Support.' Lt. Col. James R. Kelzenberg, medical plans officer in the 88<sup>th</sup> RRC, said the main purpose of the conference was to "develop a standard approach to enhancing the Deployment Cycle Support Program throughout the U.S. Army Reserve RRCs to develop mission-capable Soldiers and self-reliant families."

The conference was attended by behavioral health, family readiness and chaplain representatives from six of the ten RRCs as well as the U.S. Army Reserve Chief of the Family Readiness Program, C.R. Lee Ratliff, Jr.

Participants spent three days at Fort Snelling identify-

ing and recommending behavioral health training to best fit the needs of units, Soldiers and family readiness groups throughout the RRCs. They shared their successful approaches, materials and ideas in group forums and panel discussions. Working in teams, they developed standards in order to tailor briefings, materials and techniques. They discussed how to best integrate the recommended services and overcome barriers to funding and implementation. These dedicated personnel collaborated toward the common goal of meeting emotional, spiritual and behavioral health needs of Soldiers and their families.

The route to this common goal was paved also by the insight from a number of subject matter experts, including keynote speaker, Mr. Don Elverd. A Vietnam infantry combat veteran and psychologist at a local addiction treatment center, Elverd focused his remarks on the value of stress resiliency. He said specific efforts made through such organized groups as the COSC can eliminate issues resulting from flaws and gaps in the U.S. military homecoming process.

In a sentiment close to the one verbalized by Erickson, Elverd said, "Emotional support, or the perception of emotional support, is what gives many the ability to stretch to take on more risk".

According to a recent televised CNN documentary on combat stress, the crevice between community culture and self-reliance has been determined to be a factor in the high incidence of post traumatic stress syndrome seen in a number of Vietnam veterans, particularly those who were sent individually to fill casualty related holes in existing units. They entered an environment where the support system had already been built within the company or unit, a system which did not tend to open to include a newcomer. At the end of the mobilization the Soldier was often sent home as an individual, rather than as a unit-without the buddies with whom they had been living, working, fighting; their support system. These Soldiers came back to the U.S. feeling alone, having no one to talk with who could understand, who had 'been there'.

This is the type of trauma that Elverd says can be avoided in today's returning Soldiers due to the work being done in the COSC. "Trauma: a disorder of hope" is Elverd's phrase of description for such suffering. Another (anonymous) trauma survivor described his own way of dealing with painful memories, "I do not believe these memories were meant to destroy me, I believe they were meant to strengthen me. The same boiling water that weakens a carrot strengthens an egg." This is the goal of the COSC; to assist in immersing the traumatized, the stressed, in the healing waters of hope.

For COSC assistance in the 88<sup>th</sup> RRC: 1-800-THE-ARMY, Ext.3254, 3255, 3882.

# American Soldier is Time's Person of the Year

American Forces Press Service  
WASHINGTON, Dec. 21, 2003 – The American Soldier, Time magazine's choice for Person of the Year, is "exactly right," the nation's top military officer told Sunday news shows audiences here today.

The magazine cover is a "fitting tribute to these young men and women who have volunteered to serve their country and are over there doing a superb job," Joint Chiefs Chairman Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers said on CNN's "Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer."

The general just returned Dec. 20 from visiting 25,000 troops in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Bahrain and Djibouti. "The military in many cases stands between terrorists and their goal," the chairman said on "Fox News Sunday." "They're doing a terrific job. America ought to be proud of its military."

"These folks look like they're ready for inspection," Myers told the Fox audience about his overseas trip. "It's hard to tell the 101st Airborne (Division) up in Mosul, Iraq, have been there nine months and had to fight their way through Baghdad to get there. They look terrific. They understand the mission. They're confident in the mission. They take care of one another."

"They're making a real difference in Afghanistan and in Iraq," he said on CBS' "Face the Nation."

"They're changing the scenery for the good."

Myers said the capture of disposed Iraq dictator Saddam Hussein is "a big step in the inevitable process of Iraq's march to democracy."

Upon Saddam's capture, Myers told CNN viewers, it was important for the security of Iraqi people, coalition forces and for all those who are trying to make a better Iraq to show that the former dictator was indeed captured. "He was such a powerful figure at one time, it was important to show the Iraqi people that he's no longer going to be an influence in their lives," he added.

Information obtained when Saddam was captured has led to a better understanding of the structure of the former regime, and subsequently more than 200 people have been detained, Myers said on Fox.

The general noted that since Saddam's capture more



Soldiers from the 318th Public Affairs Operations Center, 88th RRC, from Forest Park, Illinois, on patrol near oil rig fire in Iraq.

*Photo donated by 318th Public Affairs Operations Center.*

and more Iraqis have stepped forward with information on former regime elements. He said it's "probably because they're not afraid any more. (There's) a realization that the Baath Party is never coming back to power," he added. "The new Iraq will be based on democratic principles."

Myers said the plot to kidnap members of the Iraqi Governing Council and then offer them in exchange for Saddam is not unusual. "We know that they would love to stop the progress in Iraq," he added. "We've seen them go after the infrastructure. We've seen them go after (Iraqi) chiefs of police. They've gone after mayors."

The chairman talked on CNN about the possibility that insurgents have had access to inside information resulting in the attacks on the Al Rasheed Hotel in October and on coalition administrator Ambassador L. Paul Bremer's convoy earlier this month. Acknowledging that any breaches in security are a concern, Myers said "we have to work our counterintelligence people very hard to ensure that we maintain operational security and protect people the best we can."

Despite this, the general told the Fox audience the courage of U.S. and coalition forces, the Iraqi people and the governing council shines through.

More than 100 Iraqis in security forces have given their lives to secure that country, he added.

When asked about recent al Qaeda threats concerning attacks against the United States, Myers said intelligence tips are taken "very, very seriously." "There's no doubt



from the intelligence we pick up that they want to do away with our way of life," he added. "If they could cause another catastrophic event like the tragedy of 9/11 or if they could get their hands on weapons of mass destruction and make it 10,000 not 3,000 (deaths), they would do that and not just in the United States but in other parts of the free world."

The general said there are troops doing great work to mitigate these threats here at home as well as in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa.

Myers said he believes there are weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and it's only a matter of time until they are found.

"It's going to be like finding Saddam Hussein," he added. "You need the right series of events, the right individuals to keep track and say, 'Here's where we think it is.'"

The same is true in the search for Osama bin

Laden, Myers said on "Face the Nation."

"We track down every lead. There are people in this government and in other governments who are dedicated to finding him," he added. "His options for hiding become less and less as we gain more and more intelligence. As we keep working this trail, it's like any good detective work, any good intelligence work: One lead leads to the next lead."

Since Operation Iraqi Freedom began in March, 461 U.S. troops have died and the chairman told CNN what a tragedy these deaths are. "It's a tough business," he added.

He said trying to change a country that had been in dictatorship and ruled by fear and terror to a democracy takes a lot of sacrifice. "It takes a lot of personal courage," he added. "Our Soldiers won't back down from this. We have the resolve and the will to carry this through."

Net Federal Services, Rancho Cordova, Calif., Humana Military Healthcare Services, Louisville Ky., and TriWest Healthcare Alliance Corps., Phoenix, Ariz. The new contracts will replace the current seven contracts and will be simpler for the government to administer.

"The new contracts are part of the secretary's transformation efforts

and will make a strong program better, said Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr.

Each contract includes at least a nine month transition plus five one year option periods for health care delivery and support. The turnover of responsibility for services in the newly aligned regions will be phased in, starting with areas in the West region on June 1st, 2004, and will be completed by November 2004.

"I anticipate a smooth transition," said Winkenwerder. "Through the transition period, beneficiaries will receive information about enrollment choices, primary-care manager selections and the availability of specialists."

"I am very pleased with this next generation of Tricare contracts, They will take us to the next step in focusing on our patients, claims efficiency, ease of portabil-

ity and enhancing our military medical facilities," said LTG James B. Peake, Army Surgeon General.

Health Net Federal Services is the awardee for the \$2.2 billion contract for the Tricare North region (Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illi-

nois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts,

setts, Michigan New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.)

Humana Military Healthcare Services is the awardee for the \$2 billion contract for the Tricare south region.

Tricare West Health care Alliance Corps is the awardee for the \$2.1 billion contract for the Tricare West region (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota portion of Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.)

During the transition period, beneficiaries will continue to file claims with their current Tricare contractor (DoD).

**"I am very pleased with this next generation of Tricare contracts, they will take us to the next step..."**

## TRICARE

**Three companies receive new contracts for TRICARE**

The change in TRICARE contracts and regions will have an impact on the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command. Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin will have a new contractor - Health Net Federal Services. These states

(among others) will transition from 'Heartland Region 2/5' to the new TRICARE North Region. TriWest will continue as the contractor for the state of Minnesota. The region will transition from 'Central Region 7/8' to the new TRICARE West region.

The next generation of Tricare contracts have been awarded to Health

# Leaders Identification Tab

## UPDATE

By Sgt. 1st Class Susanne Aspley  
88th RRC Public Affairs Office

During the 88th Regional Readiness Command's 2004 Spring Commanders' Conference, Brig. Gen. Michael W. Beasley wore what looked like a 'pool table green' felt band around his shoulder boards, with his rank centered on top. This is the Combat Leader's Identification (CLI), nicknamed by combat Soldiers as the 'Green Tab.' It has a new name: the LII (Leaders Identification Insignia.)

The history behind the cloth tab of the combat leader originated in the European Theater of Operations in June 1944, when it was authorized for wear by commanders at all levels from squad to Army. Additionally, it was authorized for wear by other officers and Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) whose role in combat required them to exercise the function of command (for example, the battery executive of a field artillery battery.)

When the CLI was adopted Army-wide in 1948 (IDA Circular 202, dated 7 July 1948), it was authorized for Infantry, Armored, Airborne and Cavalry Divisions, Artillery, Constabulary organizations and certain Engineer and Chemical Battalions. Authority was expanded by DA Circular 315, dated 8 October 1945, to Corps and personnel of units whose primary mission was to direct combat training of Infantry, Armored and Artillery Soldiers and Units.

In a discussion of the CLI in 1950, the Army Uniform Board pointed out that while in close proximity to the enemy it was advisable to remove symbols of rank, and the green tab, which was inconspicuous yet distinctive, was adopted as a substitute for symbols of rank to identify the leaders of such organizations. Paragraph 28-21 of Army Regulation (AR) 670-1 was recently changed

and a message sent to the field on how this traditional leadership identification insignia would be worn today, as well as its new name. The new policy is in effect upon the Soldier's ability to procure the insignia, however, mandatory wear date is no later than Sept. 11, 2004.

"The Army is an expeditionary force that challenges our leaders Army-wide to remain vigilant and committed to lead, support and together win the Global War on Terrorism. These war fighters are best served by recognizing their skills, courage and commitment in fighting today's unconventional war," the message reads.

"To this effect, the current policy of combat arms (CA) Soldiers wearing the combat leaders Identification insignia on the uniform is expanded to include Combat Support (CS) and Combat Service Support (CSS) units.

Additionally, based on these new combative roles our leaders engage in while in the Fighting Field (regardless of location), the CLI insignia requires an alignment in its name to identify today's leaders as unconventional war fighters. To

this effect, the insignia currently known as the CLI is renamed as the "Leaders Identification Insignia, or LII" the message continues.

The LII is a green cloth loop, 1 5/8 inches wide, which is worn in the middle of both epaulets on the Army green coat, the cold-weather coat and on the center tab of the extended cold-weather clothing system ("Gore-Tex") parka. It is worn by commanders, their deputies, command sergeants major and first sergeants, platoon/section leaders and their platoon/section sergeants, squad leaders and team leaders.



**Brig. Gen. Michael W. Beasley, 88th Regional Readiness Command Commander, wears a green leaders tab at the Spring Commander's Conference.**

*Photo by Sgt. Tony M. Lindback,  
88th RRC Public Affairs Office.*

A Joint Message From General Peter J. Schoomaker, Chief of Staff, United States Army, and the Honorable R. L. Brownlee, Acting Secretary of the Army

Never in recent memory have our Army values, the Soldier's creed, and our warrior ethos been more important for us to reflect upon than today. Our Army is serving our Nation with great courage and honor during very dangerous times. We enjoy great support and the confidence of the American people, whom we serve, and we are respected around the globe. In view of current events, we must re-double our efforts, hold our heads high and drive on to accomplish our individual tasks and collective missions. Integrity is nonnegotiable. Everyone has leadership responsibilities when it comes to the legal, moral and ethical. Discipline is doing what is right when no one is watching. We are proud of you and our Army. **DRIVE ON!**

## Post-deployment physicals offered to reserve Soldiers

By Spc. Lorie Jewell

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, April 8, 2004) - Reserve-component Soldiers going through the process of being released from active duty following deployments are given the option of a physical, a senior Army medical official said.

The physical is in addition to required demobilization-related health assessments required said Col. James Gilman, Chief of Health Policy and Services in the Office of the Surgeon General.

Army policy requires all Soldiers, reserve and active, to complete a DD Form 2796 (Post-Deployment Health Assessment) that assesses deployment-specific issues and have a face-to-face interview with a health care provider upon redeployment. Health care providers arrange additional consultations, examinations, counseling, and testing as appropriate. In addition, reserve-component Soldiers being released from active duty complete a second health assessment, Report of Medical Assessment or DD Form 2697. Reservists who do not deploy outside the US still go through these same steps, Gilman said.

"The Surgeon General went beyond that and said that for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, we will provide every reserve-component Soldier a physical before they are off active duty if they want one," Gilman said. That option has been in place for some time, he added.

In addition to the screenings, health care providers take a blood test from each Soldier that is held in storage in case testing needs to be done at a later time, Gilman said. If they have been out of the country, they also get a TB skin test, he added.

The physical includes taking a Soldier's height, weight,

blood pressure, pulse and temperature and a 'hands-on' evaluation of their head, face, scalp, nose, sinuses, mouth, throat, ears (drums), eyes, heart, lungs, vascular system, abdomen, feet, spine, skin, breast and neurological exam, the memorandum explained. However, the physi-

cal is not quite the same as the periodic physical examination, Gilman said.

"After Soldiers leave active duty, they have 180 days of additional Tricare benefits available once they get home," Gilman said.

Reserve-component Soldiers are also medically screened before being deployed. Medical records are reviewed and a pre-deployment health assessment (DD Form 2795) is completed.

"The vast majority of the Soldiers who mobilized with significant chronic medical problems were prevented from deploying appropriately," Gilman said. "As a matter of fact, effective screening contributed to the buildup of the Soldiers in medical holdover status at places like Fort Stewart."

**After Soldiers leave active duty, they have 180 days of additional Tricare benefits**

Of the reserve-component Soldiers who have been medically evacuated from Iraq and Kuwait, about 7

percent were because of chronic medical conditions, Gilman said.

"That's what our analysis shows thus far," Gilman said. "That could be because the conditions may not have been disclosed, or they did not show up during the screening but surfaced later over there."





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